

# FLIGHT JACKET

Vol. 14 Issue 13

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

July 9, 2012

## Independence Day

Color guard marches  
in Fourth of July  
parade







## Fighting Irish: deployed crew chief fulfills dream

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 provided close-air-support for a troop insertion as well as aerial reconnaissance in the southwestern region.

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## Marines, firefighters come together for training

Joint training between agencies ensures that proper coordination will be made in the event of a large scale emergency.

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## VMM-166 tests out new landing grounds

VMM-166 landed in different sites on Camp Pendleton to help biologists determine if using the sites for training would hurt the environment.

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Maj. Gen.  
Andrew O'Donnell Jr.  
Commanding General  
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Frank A. Richie  
Commanding Officer  
MCAS Miramar

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or questions should be directed to 858-577-6000.

# Marine Wife Recognition Award goes to Sasha Lightfoot

Photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



Bobby Butcher, left, chairman of the Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation, and Jeanie Spies, center, the chairman of the Irene Ferguson Marine Wife Recognition Award committee, congratulates Sasha Lightfoot, right, recipient of the Irene Ferguson Marine Wife Recognition Award and a Fort Worth, Texas native at an award ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. Lightfoot earned the award for her personal work during the February AH-1 Super Cobra accident. Lightfoot personally visited the surviving spouses and family members with her husband, offering a perspective and help that only a military wife and mother can offer. In the days and weeks following the mishap, Lightfoot remained extremely busy and focused her energy on supporting the surviving families of the Marines who perished, while coordinating assistance from the squadron spouses and external agencies.



Bobby Butcher, left, chairman of the Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation, speaks about the deeds of Sasha Lightfoot, right, recipient of the Irene Ferguson Marine Wife Recognition Award and a Fort Worth, Texas, native, at an award ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. Lightfoot was recognized for her strength of character, personal sacrifice and commitment to family, community and country.

## ON THE COVER:

The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 Color Guard with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., presents the colors at the 31st annual Rancho Santa Fe Fourth of July parade, July 4. After the singing of the national anthem, the color guard led the parade. (Illustration by Pfc. Raquel Barraza)

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# Chefs of the West compete for the best

By Pfc. Raquel Barraza



Bruce Bancroft, far left, G-4 logistics division officer, Marine Corps Installations West, and Col. Frank A. Richie, far right, commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, stand with Sgt. Jose Rojas, left, and Sgt. Loan Brookes, right, both chief cooks with Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, Calif., the winners of the Chef of the Quarter competition at the Gonzales Hall aboard MCAS Miramar, Calif., June 27. Rojas and Brooks also won a trip to the Culinary Institute in New York to study for five weeks.



Kenny Ponce, a chief cook with Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Puebla, Mexico, native, serves herbs lemonade to guests at the Chef of the Quarter competition at the Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. The Chef of the Quarter competition takes place every quarter for all the cooks of any Marine Corps installation on the West Coast.



Lance Cpls. Andrew Thompson, a Waterford, Mich., native and Terrel Butler, a Newport News, Va., native, both cooks at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., stand with the display of their menu for the Chef of the Quarter competition at the Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. The Chef of the Quarter is a two day competition during which chefs are tested on their knowledge, skills and techniques.

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# Honing skills: Falcons practice

Photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



*Sgt. Herman Dillard, a quarterback with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Falcons football team and a St. Louis native, performs a calf stretch before a practice aboard MCAS Miramar, June 25. Stretching together builds the team's sense of brotherhood and allows them to safely practice without injury.*



*The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Falcons football team runs warm up laps before practice aboard MCAS Miramar, June 25. Last year's Best of the West champions prepare for the season by practicing their techniques and honing their skills as a team.*



*Lance Cpl. Spencer Studer, a defensive lineman with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Falcons football team and a Parker, Colo., native, pushes the line during a practice aboard MCAS Miramar, June 25. The Falcons practiced drills to increase their agility and sharpen their reaction times for movements and plays out on the field during a game.*





# Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 Color Guard kicks off parade

By Pfc. Raquel Barraza



*The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 Color Guard with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., turns the street corner at the 31st annual Rancho Santa Fe Fourth of July parade, July 4. The crowd applauded and cheered as the Color Guard passed the flag that was raised by the community's local Boy Scouts.*



*The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 Color Guard with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., marches by at the 31st annual Rancho Santa Fe Fourth of July parade, July 4. The 31st annual RSF parade is held every year by the community of Rancho Santa Fe.*

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# FIGHTING IRISH: DEPLOYED CREW CHIEF FULFILLS DREAM

By Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot



*An air crew with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 preps its UH-1Y Huey for return to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, June 20. Hueys and AH-1W Super Cobras are typically used to provide close-air-support because of their ability to provide heavy firepower and 360-degree security.*

*Lance Cpl. Seamus Clarke, a crew chief with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 and Binghamton, N.Y., native, performs aerial reconnaissance over Helmand province, Afghanistan, June 20. Clarke is on his first deployment and said being a UH-1Y Huey crew chief has been the best experience of his life.*



**H**ELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Flying over southwestern Afghanistan, a voice came over the radio, drawing the crew chiefs' attention to a large truck and SUVs racing through the desert. Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469, "Vengeance," were performing aerial reconnaissance in the area, looking for any suspicious vehicles or potential insurgent activity.

Binghamton, N.Y., native, Lance Cpl. Seamus Clarke, is on his first deployment, much like his squadron, but he is well prepared for combat.

"My brother's a Marine, my family was all in the Marine Corps, so it's kind of a tradition," said Clarke. "I joined the Marine Corps because ever since I was a little kid, I've always been taught that you need to serve your country before you can go on and do your own thing in life."

With a Celtic tattoo, bushy mustache and a name like "Seamus," Clarke puts the "fighting Irish" into his combat tour.

Staff Sgt. Robert Wise, also a crew chief with the squadron and Daytona Beach, Fla., native, personally chose Clarke to be his fellow crewman when he flies combat operations.

"I'm the aircrew training manager for the squadron, so I paired up all the combat crews for our unit," said Wise. "I felt like he had a lot of potential ... He's advanced quite a lot in the short time we've been out here."

Clarke explained that light attack helicopter squadrons, stocked

with UH-1Y Hueys and AH-1W Super Cobras, have a unique advantage in their ability to deliver heavy firepower and maintain a 360-view of the battle space.

These traits make light attack helicopter crews ideally suited for close-air-support of Marines on the ground, as well as their larger helicopter and tiltrotor counterparts, CH-53D Sea Stallions, CH-53E Super Stallions and MV-22B Ospreys.

"Any sort of mission, [my worry is] always who's going to be the one to try and engage me, and shoot at me," said Clarke. "I trust the other crew chief on the other side of the aircraft to watch his side and it's up to me to watch my side and make sure we don't end up in a sticky situation."

Clarke first got the inspiration to become a crew chief when an old friend, a Vietnam veteran and former Huey crew chief himself, suggested the job.

"He said it was the best job he's ever done," explained Clarke. "I went to the recruiter to see if they had any openings and they did, so I picked this job. It's been the best time of my life so far."

Clarke and Wise took notes on the suspicious vehicles to report to their squadron's intelligence section, and completed the flight without incident.

A perennial New York Yankees fan, Clarke said he looks forward to seeing baseball season again, and perhaps one day being a crew chief instructor himself.

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Navy Petty Officers 3rd Class Nicholas Becker (left) and Joshua Blanchard (right), hospital corpsmen with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 completed a three-week tour at the Bastion Role 3 hospital where they were able to put their life-saving skills to the test. While there, the two worked side-by-side with hospital staff and assisted the emergency department in dealing with combat injuries on a regular basis.



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicholas Becker, a hospital corpsman with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 and native of Independence, Iowa, completed a three-week tour at the Bastion Role 3 hospital. Becker said he gained a substantial amount of experience while there, which will help him throughout his Navy career. The Bastion hospital is the only one of its kind in Regional Command Southwest and one of three in the entire country. The hospitals are staffed with a variety of medical specialists, ranging from intensive care doctors to radiologists and surgeons.

# Corpsmen Up: Wing sailors gain combat life-saving experience

By Cpl. Isaac Lamberth

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan - The Bastion Role 3 hospital is known in Helmand province for its superb medical care and the extraordinary talent of its medical staff. Completing a three-week tour at the hospital, two sailors from Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 gained combat life-saving experience and were able to apply their training while there.

Navy Petty Officers 3rd Class Nicholas Becker and Joshua Blanchard, hospital corpsmen with the squadron, began working at the Bastion-based hospital hoping to put their medical training to use. They would soon be put to the test as the hospital regularly receives combat injuries.

Known to some simply as ‘Role 3,’ the code for the top echelon of medical care provided, the Bastion hospital is the only one of its kind in Regional Command Southwest and one of three in the entire country.

The hospitals are staffed with a variety of medical specialists, ranging from intensive care doctors to radiologists and surgeons, who see a wide range of injuries.

While there, the duo’s medical skills and knowledge were put to the test.

“We saw a lot of critical injuries come in,” said Becker, a native of Independence, Iowa.

“Some of these guys just got out of engagements and really needed our help.”

Becker said the diversity of the hospital was a bit overwhelming, but he adapted and believes it will benefit him in the long run.

“I was a bit apprehensive when I first got there because of all the different countries that work there and the different procedures that are used,” he explained. “I was used to working alone and doing battlefield medicine. I had to change the way I was doing things and work as a team. Everyone on the team has a part to do and it took me a while to get used to that and

not just think of it as a one-man show.”

Members of the United Kingdom, Estonia, Netherlands, U.S. Army and numerous service members from other countries make up the staff of the Role 3. Becker believes the diversity of the staff benefited him and gave him a new appreciation for working with a coalition of forces.

Blanchard, a Carson City, Nev., native, said saving people’s lives helped him feel like he was making a difference.

He said one of the most rewarding experiences he had was when a seven-year-old boy arrived at the hospital with a gunshot wound to the chest and survived.

“To me, seeing him live after all he had been through. . .it was an amazing sight,” he said.

Riding on the heels of the 114th birthday of the Navy Hospital Corps, a bit of pride resides inside both sailors.

“We were the only Navy guys there in the entire hospital,” Becker said. “Not only that, but our birthday was coming up and it sends a feeling of pride through you that men and women before you have been doing this for over a hundred years. We’re still continuing that tradition of saving lives on the battlefield.”

Upon completing their time at Role 3, Becker and Blanchard have both resumed their normal duties within the squadron.

With real-life trauma experiences under his belt, Becker hopes to apply his new knowledge in future endeavors. Becker said he plans to apply to Marine Special Operations Command or the Navy SEALs.

Blanchard said the knowledge he gained in the three weeks at Role 3 will follow him for the rest of his time in the Navy.



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Joshua Blanchard, a hospital corpsman with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 and Carson City, Nev., native, completed a three-week tour at the Bastion Role 3 hospital working side-by-side with staff there. Blanchard said he was able to put his medical training to use and felt good about making a difference while he was there.



# Marines, firefighters train together to prepare for joint responses

By Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

“Our mission is always to mitigate any problems happening at the time and foresee and prevent problems in the future,” said Chuck DeLao, fire engineer with the San Diego Fire Department.

Cpl. Shawn Keller, a hazardous material entry team rescueman with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting and a Bradley, Ill., native, sprays foam used to prevent a fire from igniting during a training exercise in San Diego, June 21. ARFF and hazardous material teams with the San Diego and Camp Pendleton Fire Departments trained together to ensure when responding to an emergency jointly, the mission is successful and ran safely.





Staley Myers (right), a captain with San Diego Fire Department briefs Marines and firefighters during a training exercise in San Diego, June 21. Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting and hazardous material teams with the San Diego and Camp Pendleton Fire Departments trained together to ensure when responding to an emergency jointly, the mission is successful and run safely.

A tanker truck is driving down a steep hill and as it rounds the corner the driver loses control. The rig rolls on its side with 8,000 gallons of gasoline in its tank. The gasoline leaks onto the street. It could ignite and catch surrounding buildings and houses on fire at any moment.

Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Marines and hazardous material teams with San Diego Fire Department and Camp Pendleton Fire Department come together to train.

Once a month, San Diego Fire Department holds training exercises and encourages other units to join. During these training exercises, a new scenario is brought up, and together, the different agencies train to work through an emergency.

“We work together to increase the size of the pool of qualified people to help,” said Russell Simon, a captain with the San Diego Fire Department. “If we’re all on the same page and can work together it allows us to deal with virtually any emergency that may arise.”

After a quick class and practical application, the Marines and firefighters put on their suits and began the training exercise. Marines and hazardous material team members from different units stabilized the rig to prevent it from moving and used a ladder to get on top of the tank. They teamed up to drill holes into the tank to remove the gasoline before the tank could be moved.

“Marines enjoy the training with the other units,” said Sgt. Jeson Coleman, hazardous material chief with ARFF and a Cleveland native. “It builds confidence in not only their skills, but the skills of the firefighters they may have to work with in an emergency.”

Marines and firefighters take preventative measures to prohibit the emergency from escalating. Using foam, designed to protect objects from catching fire, they can work to ensure a fire is not ignited or spread.

“Our mission is always to mitigate any problems happening at the time and foresee and prevent problems in the future,” said Chuck DeLao, fire engineer with the San Diego Fire Department.

By preparing for any situation, ARFF Marines and the hazardous material teams can be confident in one another’s skills and equipment. They can make certain that when working together during an incident, the mission will be accomplished safely and successfully.



(Above) Marines with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting and firefighters with the hazardous material teams of San Diego and Camp Pendleton Fire Departments drill holes in a tank during a training exercise in San Diego, June 21. Joint training between agencies ensures that proper coordination will be made in the event of a large scale emergency.



(Left) A Marine with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting and a firefighter with San Diego Fire Department work together to drill a hole in a tank during a training exercise in San Diego, June 21. Marines with ARFF and firefighters with the hazardous material teams of the San Diego and Camp Pendleton Fire Departments trained together in a scenario where a tanker truck carrying gasoline rolled over. This training was to prepare for when the agencies team-up to respond to an emergency.



# VMM-166 helps biologists survey new landing sites

By Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

Marines of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 teamed up with biologists to certify new landing sites aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 27.

VMM-166 landed on three different locations aboard Camp Pendleton while biologists observed the animals and environment surrounding it.

“It gives us more options and flexibility to have more landing zones on Camp Pendleton,” said Capt. Russell Maben, a pilot with VMM-166 and an Orlando, Fla., native. “Especially when working with ground troops, we can have a place to load and unload troops easily.”

Three sites were investigated by pilots to see if the sites would be safe and worthwhile to use. All of the sites, if approved, will be used for confined area landing training.

“You can never have too much practice for anything,” said Lance Cpl. Evin T. Haines, a crew chief with VMM-166 and a Houston native. “If the pilots land on the same zones all the time, the pilots can become complacent with them. No two places are exactly the same.”

Biologists from Camp Pendleton studied how wildlife would react to the aircraft landing to ensure that the environment and animal species would not be hurt while the zones were in use. Zones must be looked at not only for legal reasons, but the base is protected land for wildlife.

If training in new landing zones had any detrimental effect on the environment or the animals that live in it, the biologists wouldn’t allow it to happen, said Haines.

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(Left) Lance Cpl. Evin T. Haines, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 and a Houston native, looks out of the back door of an MV-22B Osprey during a site survey to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 27. VMM-166 teamed up with biologists aboard Camp Pendleton in hopes to approve new landing sites to be used for confined area landing.



(Below) Lance Cpl. Evin T. Haines, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 and a Houston native, looks out of the back door of an MV-22B Osprey during a site survey to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 27. To approve new landing areas for training, VMM-166 and biologists surveyed how landing would affect the surrounding environment.



An MV-22B Osprey with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 prepares to take flight aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. VMM-166 landed in different sites on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton to help biologists determine if using the sites for training would hurt the environment.



# Happy homecoming for ‘Heavy Haulers’

By Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

A crowd of Marines and families cheered as four CH-53 Super Stallions circled the skies above Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 21.

Marines with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 “Heavy Haulers” touched down on home soil for the first time in seven months. The Marines spent this time aboard the USS Makin Island, serving as the air combat element for the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Marines and families collided in a shower of hugs, kisses and tears as they reunited during the welcome home celebration.

“We supported the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit as the ACE element,” said Maj. Scott Trent, the detachment officer in charge with HMH-462 and a West Hartford, Conn., native.

The Heavy Haulers provided troop movement, mail and courier runs, for the 11th MEU as well as Tactical Recovery Aircraft and Personnel stand-by.

While the Heavy Haulers provided this support they also found time to improve themselves in various manners.

“Our Marines used the time wisely to better their proficiency with the [Marine Corps Martial Arts Program], complete [Marine Corps Institute] classes and improve physical fitness,” said Trent. “We also performed training missions, especially at night, because the ship can be dangerous to land on at night.”

The Marines kept up on this training to ensure they were prepared for any situation that might arise, especially during hours of darkness.

The common sentiment for the homecoming was the fact that families were glad their loved one made it home safely.

“It’s really great to have him home,” said Gina Trent, Trent’s wife and an Arlington, Va., native.

Christian, their 16 month-old son, kept her busy so she didn’t worry as much as she could have, explained Gina.

After the Marines visit their friends and peers after months away, the families once again come together to go home for some quality time as a whole once more.



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# Highlighting helicopter history: MAG-16 celebrates 60 years

By Lance Cpl. Michelle Piehl

Twelve aircraft flew a historical path along the California coast, highlighting the achievements of Marine Aircraft Group 16 aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., for their 60th anniversary, June 28.

Each of the aircraft represents a squadron within MAG-16. Six MV-22B Ospreys and six CH-53 Super Stallions participated in the anniversary flight.

First established in 1952, MAG-16 was the first helicopter group in the Marine Corps.

“It is American history,” said Lt. Col. Kevin M. Duffy, the MAG-16 operations officer. “It is 60 years of serving the individual Marine, via helicopter transport. I think it’s a pretty momentous and significant event to think about. We’ve been at the forefront of technology and the use of that technology.”

The 12 squadrons of MAG-16 share a robust daily interaction, describes Duffy.

MAG-16 consists of six Marine heavy helicopter squadrons and four Marine medium tiltrotor squadrons, as well as Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 374.

“They work individually, but they also work together to make the mission happen,” said Duffy. “We have a term here that we use: HMM-West or VMM-West. Even though we have six VMM squadrons and four HMM squadrons, a lot of times we’ll accomplish the mission with equipment, aircraft and Marines from each of the units. It’s very positive. All the commanders and units have a great working relationship to get the job done.”

In the last quarter, MAG-16 participated in 22 community related events, most of which were air shows and static displays.

While air shows demonstrate the airborne capabilities of the aircraft, static displays serve as a unique opportunity for the community to have an up-close-and-personal view of the aircraft. Therefore, each of the static displays is supported with a pilot and crew chief to allow community members to explore the inside of the mammoth machines.

Duffy explained the significance and accomplishments of vertical envelopment since the Vietnam War. With the development of the MV-22B Osprey, the versatile aircraft slated to replace the CH-46E Sea Knight, the capabilities of these aircraft continue to advance.

“The history of the nation and what we have had to do to defend this nation walks in step with what we’ve done here at MAG-16,” said Duffy. “I think that it’s important that the community knows what the Marines of the local community have done to support the nation.”

Keeping in flight for 60 years requires adaptation to ensure quality, safety and mission success.

“We’ve had our 60 years of history,” said Duffy. “One of the great things about the Marine Corps, and MAG-16 is that we adapt to new technology.”

Highlighting the achievements of MAG-16 took massive amounts of planning.

In addition to hundreds of hours pilots spend working, planning and coordinating flight paths, air crew members must complete numerous hours training and preparing for each mission.

Ground crew members also contribute a mammoth number of hours before and after each flight.

Prior to any flight, anywhere from 28-50 hours of preparation work is done per mechanic, on each aircraft, explained Master Gunner Sgt. Pete Reyes, the maintenance chief with MAG-16 and a Fresno, Calif., native.

With five or six mechanics working on each of the 12 aircraft, the number of hours soars into the thousands.

“Every job is important,” said Reyes. “Every Marine is important. Most Marines believe what they are doing is truly important. It’s a sense of teamwork.”

A large number of cooperative efforts attributes to the success of MAG-16.

One of the biggest factors in the longtime vitality of MAG-16 is the variety of terrain located on the West Coast. This enables the pilots and air crew to have practical training for amphibious, desert,

*Continued next page*

*Three CH-53 Super Stallions with Marine Aircraft Group 16 fly in formation while retracing the historical path of the unit through southern California, June 28. Celebrating 60 years of assault support excellence, MAG-16 flew 12 aircraft, both MV-22B Ospreys and CH-53E Super Stallions, to represent each of the 12 squadrons within MAG-16. Four MV-22B Ospreys took the lead, followed by the Super Stallions, to make an awe-inspiring formation over the community.*





mountain and urban terrains, as well as long-range flights, cold-weather training and confined area landings.

“Allowing the pilots and aircrew to train in a dusty area prepares them for the actual terrain [in the Middle East],” said Reyes. “Being close to so many different types of terrains and environments gets us prepared. It’s the same thing we’ve done back here, just a different country.”

Another factor in the success of MAG-16 is the dependence on respect. Reyes explained the reciprocal trust between the pilots and crew members. Daily, the pilots put their lives in the hands of the mechanics who prepare the aircraft for safe flight. The mechanics in return trust the pilots will return safely with the aircraft. While in flight, the crew puts their lives in the hands of the pilots to safely fly them to their mission, while they ensure the equipment is functioning as it should in the back of the aircraft.

“Everyone knows their ranks, everyone knows who is an officer and who is enlisted,” said Reyes. “But when we get in the back of [an aircraft], it’s one team. There is no rank; the mutual respect is out there.”

This mutual respect keeps MAG-16 ready to accomplish any mission. Regardless of the outcome, Reyes said he believes every mission is a success, as long as two key points are remembered: no one is left behind and MAG-16 continues to keep flying.

Reyes recalled seeing a sign posted outside of Marine Corps Air Station New River.

“It says: ‘Pardon our noise, it’s the sound of freedom,’” said Reyes. “I firmly believe in that. When the community comes out for air shows and demonstrations, it’s a chance to say thank you to them. It’s a chance to show them what we’re about; this is what we’ve been doing.”

The anniversary flight is an opportunity to display the past 60 years in the history of aviation.

“It’s the culmination of the hard work done by everyone,” said Reyes. “It shows what teamwork is all about and the innovations of adjusting and adapting to new technology. We adapt, overcome, and keep on going. We’ll keep on pushing and doing what we do.”

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A formation of MV-22B Ospreys fly at a low altitude to pose an aerial photograph over Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 28. The flight commemorated the years of assault support excellence with Marine Aircraft Group 16. MAG-16 flew 12 aircraft, both MV-22B Ospreys and CH-53E Super Stallions, to represent each of the 12 squadrons within MAG-16 to celebrate their 60th anniversary. A formation of CH-53E Super Stallions joined the airborne Ospreys later in the flight.




Three CH-53 Super Stallions with Marine Aircraft Group 16 fly in formation while retracing the historical path of the unit through southern California, June 28. Celebrating 60 years of assault support excellence, MAG-16 flew 12 aircraft, both MV-22B Ospreys and CH-53E Super Stallions, to represent each of the 12 squadrons within MAG-16.



Three CH-53 Super Stallions with Marine Aircraft Group 16 fly in formation while retracing the historical path of the unit through southern California, June 28. Celebrating 60 years of assault support excellence, MAG-16 flew 12 aircraft to represent each of the 12 squadrons within MAG-16. Four MV-22B Ospreys took the lead, followed by the Super Stallions, to make an awe-inspiring formation over the community.





# Safety on 'cycles no joke: Marines endeavor to improve

By Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

*Staff Sgt. Andrew Truxton, the wire chief with Alpha Wire Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Dover, Del., native, practices his throttle control during a Superbike Advance Rider Track Day at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, June 28. Before starting their laps, Marines spent time in front of a white board where instructors taught proper techniques for corner transitions, proper entry speeds and throttle control for the turns.*



James Toohey, left, a motorcycle instructor with California Superbike School and a Fresno, Calif., native, and Capt. Donald Williams, center, the motorcycle club president with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Roswell, N.M., native, give Sgt. Patrick Martinez, right, a wireman with MWCS-38 and a Gering, Neb., native, a few pointers on his riding style during a Superbike Advance Rider Track Day at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, June 28. Marines had the chance to speak to the instructors for pointers on body positioning on the motorcycle, the angles they were turning at and how to get the safest turn possible.



Marines with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., took part in a Superbike Advance Rider Track Day at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, June 28.

“The reason we’re doing this is because we saw a gap in the motorcycle training that is offered on base,” said Capt. Donald Williams, the motorcycle club president with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 -38 and a Roswell, N.M., native. “In the Marine Corps we try to do a ‘crawl, walk, run’ kind of training, but there was that gap, there was no walk. So we brought in California Superbike to teach us how to walk.”

During training, the Marines learned basic concepts like turning, braking and proper entry speeds into a turn while transitioning from one corner to another.

“What I’ve noticed is that these Marines have a very basic knowledge of what they’re doing,” said Williams. “They understand how to shift gears, make the bike move forward, how to get it to stop, but they don’t know how to transition between corners, proper throttle control entering a corner and things of that nature. That is the point of this course.”

Before starting their laps, Marines spent time in front of a white board where instructors taught proper techniques.

While conducting practice laps, Marines had the chance to speak to the instructors for pointers on body positioning on the motor-

cycle, the angles they were turning at and how to get the safest turn possible.

“I would suggest this course to everyone,” said Staff Sgt. William Patnode, the event coordinator and a motorcycle rider instructor with Marine Air Control Group 38 and a Peru, N.Y., native. “Our target audience is the younger generation of Marines and younger riders who are at more risk, but we have [Marines] who have been riding for years here. Everyone can learn something with this course.”

According to Patnode, who began working with California Superbike in 2009, no Marine who has taken this course has been involved in a fatal motorcycle accident.

As a motorcycle instructor who can teach on Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Patnode thinks very highly of this course—he is not alone.

“This class is really good training, I’m really glad I came out,” said Cpl. Kyle Lackey, a wireman with MWCS-38 and a Jefferson, Texas, native. “They taught us techniques that a rider needs to know to stay safe. Getting the classroom time to learn what we needed to, then the time on the track to actually do it really helped.”

As the class drew to an end, the Marines who attended the course now have the techniques to keep them safe on their motorcycle while riding for business or pleasure.



Master Sgt. Vincent Frye, the operations chief for Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a New York native, practices his riding technique and body positioning during a lap at a Superbike Advance Rider Track Day at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, June 28. Marines had the chance to speak to the instructors for pointers on body positioning on the motorcycle, the angles they were turning at and how to get the safest turn possible.



Sgt. Patrick Martinez, a wireman with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Gering, Neb., native, practices his riding technique during a Superbike Advance Rider Track Day at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, June 28. During training, Marines learned basic concepts like turning, braking and proper entry speeds into a turn while transitioning from one corner to another.



# VMR: the song remains the same

Story by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

**M**arine Fixed Wing Headquarters Squadron's mission is to provide support to Marine Air Ground Task Force operations and provide commanders swift on demand support to ensure the availability of short notice time critical logistical air movement. For Marines deployed overseas in support of Enduring Operation Enduring Freedom their mission is no different.

VMR Headquarters Squadron deployed overseas has the same mission and performs the same duties, however, the VMR Detachment overseas is smaller in number and Marines must take on many job titles to accomplish the mission.

Job titles range from administration chief, operations chief, logistics and supply chief, communications and data chief, contracting officer, budget officer and other local billet requirements dictated by supporting higher headquarters.

Whether deployed or at home station, obstacles that can arise, will arise.

"Some of the obstacles encountered are not different from those encountered in tactical fixed or rotary wing squadrons," said Staff Sgt. Terrance Hoyte, staff noncommissioned officer in charge with VMR Detachment, Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, and a Rochester, N.Y., native. "While conducting missions from [forward operating base] to FOB or other airfields, communications with ground support elements in order to land, unload passengers, fuel, load up passengers and then taxi to take off are always hindered by unforeseen circumstances."

In addition to unforeseen circumstances, the overwhelming heat and

high altitude is an obstacle pressing the capabilities of the aircraft, as these are not native operating conditions, explained Lance Cpl. Randall Webster, an operations chief with VMR Detachment in Afghanistan and a Washington, native.

"Getting use to the heat and altitude take a bit of time, but I was well prepared for what to expect," said Webster. "Knowledge was thoroughly passed to me from my command and my mentors who had been deployed previously."

Adapting to the weather is not the only obstacle Marines encounter. "Adapting to a new environment in the aspect of flight operations planning was a difficult task due to the fact that I am a 3043, Supply Administrator," said Gunnery Sgt. John L. Heine, staff noncommissioned officer in charge with VMR Detachment, Al Udeid, Qatar, and an Amherst, N.Y., native.

Through the harsh heat and humidity, and adapting to a foreign job, improvements at VMR continue. While overseas, VMR has made the passenger pick-up and drop-off process simpler.

"We improved the departure times by having passengers dropped off at the aircraft and picked up at the aircraft therefore decreasing the time it takes to depart eliminating a painful taxi and take off process," said Webster.

Whether deployed overseas or at home station, the ultimate mission remains the same. Though obstacles may arise, Marines with Marine Fixed Wing Headquarters Squadron push through them to improve duties performed while overseas.



Marines with Marine Fixed Wing Headquarters Squadron pose outside the detachment aboard Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. (Courtesy photo)

## Bring Your Child to Work Day at MCAS Miramar

By Pfc. Raquel Barraza



(Left) A child stands with a flak jacket and kevlar at the "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 2. At the event, all the children tried on equipment and learned about weapons used by Marines on MCAS Miramar.

(Right) Gunnery Sgt. Brian Hahne, review chief, Joint Law Center, helps a child hold a fake M-16A4 rifle at the "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 2. The "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event shows children of service members some of the equipment and aircraft their parents work with.



Michael Chambers, a firefighter with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Fire Department and San Diego native, shows children the gages of the fire truck at the "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 2. This is the second "Bring Your Child to Work Day" event that has been held at MCAS Miramar.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



# Educators visit air station during weeklong workshop

By Lance Cpl. Michelle Piehl



(Above) Eddie Berrest, a Cyprus High School coach from Salt Lake City, looks in awe at the cockpit of an F/A 18 with Navy pilot Lt. j.g. Ryan McGinnity of Marine Training Fighter Attack Squadron 101, June 27. Teachers, counselors and coaches participated in a weeklong hands-on Marine Corps experience. The educators started their day with the opportunity to ask questions to Marines stationed aboard MCAS Miramar, followed by a tour of the enlisted recreation center and library. After a look into barracks life, the educators moved to the flight line to explore an F/A-18 Hornet, a CH-53E Super Stallion and an Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting truck.



(Left) Cpl. Ryan Collins, a driver operator with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and a Marietta, Calif., native, explains the airborne capabilities of the Marine Corps to Jason Ginoza, of Clark County School District, Nev., June 27. Educators from the San Diego and Salt Lake City regions joined together during a weeklong Educators Workshop. In addition to learning about recruit life and tactical training, educators explored the airborne capabilities of the Marine Corps. The educators started their day with the opportunity to ask questions to Marines stationed aboard MCAS Miramar, followed by a tour of the enlisted recreation center and library. After a look into barracks life, the educators moved to the flight line to explore an F/A-18 Hornet, a CH-53E Super Stallion and an Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting truck.



Educators from the San Diego and Salt Lake City regions explore an F/A-18 Hornet and CH-53E Super Stallion aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. Teachers, counselors and coaches participated in a weeklong hands-on Marine Corps experience. The educators started their day with the opportunity to ask questions to Marines stationed aboard MCAS Miramar, followed by a tour of the enlisted recreation center and library. After a look into barracks life, the educators moved to the flight line to explore an F/A-18 Hornet, a CH-53E Super Stallion and an Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting truck.



Educators from the San Diego and Salt Lake City regions gather for accountability in front of a CH-53E Super Stallion aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 27. Teachers, counselors and coaches participated in a weeklong hands-on Marine Corps experience. The educators started their day with the opportunity to ask questions to Marines stationed aboard MCAS Miramar, followed by a tour of the enlisted recreation center and library. After a look into barracks life, the educators moved to the flight line to explore an F/A-18 Hornet, a CH-53E Super Stallion and an Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting truck.



# Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163

## H istory:

The Squadron's nickname, "Ridge Runners", was bestowed as a result of typhoon rescue and relief operations in the mountainous terrain surrounding Hagman, Japan. Capt Al Barbe, the Squadron Intelligence Officer and husband to a Thai bride, offered a suggestion. Because of Asian culture and beliefs, he proposed that eyes painted on the unit aircraft might have an unsettling affect upon the enemy, thus the concept of "The Eyes" on the front of HMM-163 aircraft was born.

## O sprey:

## S tats:

Length: 57 ft 4 in  
Height: 22 ft 1 in  
Wingspan: 45 ft 10 in  
Maximum speed: 275 knots



## H onors:

HMM-163 received the Chief of Naval Operations Aviation Safety Awards in 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1989, and 1996. Meritorious Unit Commendations (MUC) with one Gold Star. Named the MCAA Helicopter squadron of the Year in 1979, 1981, 1985, 1990, and 2002.

COMMANDING OFFICER: LT. COL. ERIC GARCIA

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: MAJ. PAUL B. KOPACZ

SERGEANT MAJOR: SGT. MAJ. ANTHONY G. MASS JR.



# VFW hosts steak barbecue for service members

By Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

Video by Sgt. Sarah Fiocco



(Left) Marines receive steak, potato salad, baked beans, a roll and cookies free of charge during a steak barbecue hosted by the Veterans of Foreign Wars aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, June 28. Booths were also set up giving away free prizes such as tickets to paint ball and other attractions in San Diego.

(Below) Marines entered a drawing hosted by Marine Corps Community Services during a free steak barbecue event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, June 28. MCCS provided tickets to multiple attractions in San Diego for service members to win.



Click [HERE](#) to watch more videos on YouTube

To submit a photo to The Flight Jacket, upload it to our Facebook page [HERE](#) or e-mail it [HERE](#).



For information on Marine Corps Community Services, events and announcements click the MCCS logo for their weekly newsletter.

For the Base Guide, click [HERE](#)

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